five years and number of persons belonging to SCs/STs among them and their percentage, as compared to the total Fellowships; and

(c) whether adequate number of Fellowships are not awarded to the persons belonging to SCs/STs if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL): (a) As per the information received from UGC, Fellowships are awarded in Humanities, Social Sciences and Sciences on the basis of NET Examination conducted jointly by UGC/CSIR.

(b) and (c) The details of total Fellowships awarded during last five years and share of SCs/STs with their percentage is indicated below:—

Year	Total No. of Fellowships	Fellowships awarded to	SCs/STs candidates
1995	397	85	22.42%
1996	680	162	23.52%
1997	858	226	26.38%
1998	711	169	26.64%
1999	701	159	22.68%

Advanced Information Technology for distance education

5125. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to examine utilisation of latest and advance information technology and other facilities in spreading distance education, instead of sending printed materials and conducting periodical contact classes; and

(b) whether Government would constitute an Expert Committee to improve the distance education and to have an elaborated study on the matter and suggest ways and means to implement the same in an efficient manner?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL): (a) Information Technology is being used to supplement the distance education being imparted through print materials and contact classes.